

NEWS RELEASE



***OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA
San Diego, California***

***United States Attorney
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For Immediate Release

NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY - September 6, 2005

United States Attorney Carol C. Lam announced that Yervand ASRIYANTS was sentenced today in U.S. District Court in San Diego by the Honorable Irma E. Gonzalez to serve three years in prison, based on his conviction for alien smuggling. Judge Gonzalez also ordered that ASRIYANTS forfeit to the United States a residential property in the Carmel Valley area of San Diego worth over a million dollars and ordered that ASRIYANTS forfeit over \$36,000 in cash that federal agents found at ASRIYANTS' residence and in a safe deposit box.

On June 9, 2005, ASRIYANTS pled guilty to one count of conspiracy to induce illegal aliens to enter the United States and two counts of bringing illegal aliens into the United States for financial gain. According to court documents, ASRIYANTS was the leader of a San Diego-based alien smuggling conspiracy that specialized in bringing Russian, Ukranian, Lithuanian, and Polish citizens through Mexico into the United States, primarily by vehicle through the Ports of Entry.

ASRIYANTS is the fifth member of the alien smuggling conspiracy to be sentenced in federal court.

Three more members of the conspiracy are awaiting sentencing later this month.

United States Attorney Lam said, "We are particularly concerned about organizations that smuggle aliens from many different parts of the world, because they represent a myriad of threats to our nation's security."

DEFENDANT

Criminal Case No. 04 CR 3084-IEG

Yervand Asriyants

SUMMARY OF CHARGES

Title 8, United States Code, Section 1324(a)(1)(A)(v)(I) - Conspiracy to Induce Illegal Aliens to Enter the United States and Conspiracy to Transport Illegal Aliens.

Maximum penalties: 10 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

Title 8, United States Code, Section 1324(a)(2)(B)(ii) and Title 18, United States Code, Section 2 - Bringing in Illegal Aliens for Financial Gain and Aiding and Abetting.

Maximum penalties: A minimum of three years in prison and a maximum of 10 years in prison for the first and second offense; a minimum of five years in prison and a maximum of 15 years in prison for any other offense; and a \$250,000 fine.

PARTICIPATING AGENCIES

Federal Bureau of Investigation

United States Department of Homeland Security, Immigration and Customs Enforcement

United States Department of Homeland Security, Customs and Border Protection

San Diego Police Department

San Diego County Sheriff's Department